

proof obtained by the defendants appearing satisfactory to the counsel for the petitioners, he candidly acknowledged that there appeared to be no foundation for their claim to freedom, and that it had been supported by misrepresentation from beginning to end, and he so informed the court, and declared, that he would not be concerned further in the business. At November term, the counsel for the defendants offered himself ready for trial, and the committee, who conducted for the society, perceiving that the judgment of the court must be against the petitioners if a trial was had, withdrew the petitions, and immediately instituted them anew, without making any compensation to the defendants for the use of his slave, alleging, that there had been no ultimate decision in the case.

That commissions again issued to Pennsylvania and New-Jersey at the instance of the petitioners, which, after some months delay, was executed, and returned a few days before the succeeding court, and during the execution of this commission two persons were sworn, viz. Sinai Elbut and Alexander House, of Philadelphia, who deposed, in a pointed manner, that the petitioners were free, and certificates were produced that they were people of character and credit. Upon a view of this proof, the counsel for the defendants informed them, that unless it could be made to appear that Sinai Elbut and Alexander House were not competent witnesses, the petitioners would obtain their freedom. It was now necessary that another commission should issue to Pennsylvania at the instance of the defendants, which issued accordingly; and after the execution of this commission the defendants offered to prove, that Sinai Elbut and Alexander House were incompetent witnesses, being born slaves, and had been manumitted some years since by their respective masters, and also to prove that Sinai Elbut was a person of obscene and indecent deportment, and infamous character, and Alexander House a drunken worthless fellow; that on return of this commission the counsel for the defendants again insisted on a trial; and having destroyed the proof fabricated on the part of the petitioners, the petitions were again withdrawn, and new petitions filed, when it was urged by the counsel for the defendants, that the legal costs of the antecedent suits, and other costs incurred, should first be paid, and the court advised those who conducted for the society to pay the costs, and to make compensation for the services of the slave, which they refused; but the court were of opinion, that by the laws now subsisting they could not compel them to pay costs, and the defendants were reduced to the alternative of again recognizing or giving up their property.

The committee further report, that the said society in Baltimore-town are numerous, wealthy and influential, composed principally of quakers, methodists, and emigrants from Ireland since the revolution, and that they are connected with another society, more numerous, in Philadelphia.

That the Messieurs Dorseys have incurred expences in travelling to Pennsylvania, New-Jersey and New-York, and attending the execution of commissions, to the amount of two hundred and fifty pounds and upwards, which greatly exceeds the value of the slaves; and it appears to the committee, that from the numbers, wealth, influence and industry, of the society, with their extensive connexions, an individual has but a slender chance of encountering them; and that, if interest only was to be considered, he had better consent to give up a slave than defend his right to him, when he is supported by such a powerful society. That whatever may be the views and intentions of the society in general, the committee are of opinion, that in this instance they have interfered in an improper, indecent, and unjustifiable manner, and that their conduct has been unjust and oppressive, and cannot be warranted upon any principle by which good citizens ought to be actuated. They are therefore of opinion, that the legislature ought to adopt measures to prevent a repetition of such grievances.

By order,

A. GOLDER, clk.

Which was read. ORDERED, That the same have a second reading on Wednesday next.

The clerk of the senate delivers the resolution in favour of John U. Charlton, endorsed; "By the senate, December 2, 1791: Read the first time and ordered to lie on the table.

"By order,

H. RIDGELY, clk.

"By the senate, December 10, 1791: Read the second time and dissented to.

"By order,

H. RIDGELY, clk."

The resolution in favour of James Haynie, endorsed; "By the senate, December 9, 1791: Read the first time and ordered to lie on the table.

"By order,

H. RIDGELY, clk.

"By the senate, December 10, 1791: Read the second time and assented to.

"By order,

H. RIDGELY, clk."

The resolution in favour of George Devilbiss, endorsed; "By the senate, November 21, 1791: Read the first time and ordered to lie on the table.

"By order,

H. RIDGELY, clk.

"By the senate, December 10, 1791: Read the second time and dissented to.

"By order,

H. RIDGELY, clk."

Which were read.

And a bill, entitled, An additional supplementary act to an act, entitled, An act to regulate the inspection of tobacco, endorsed; "By the senate, December 9, 1791: Read the first time and ordered to lie on the table.

"By order,

H. RIDGELY, clk.

"By the senate, December 10, 1791: Read the second time by especial order and will pass.

"By order,

H. RIDGELY, clk."

Which was read the first time and ordered to lie on the table.

The house adjourns till Monday morning 9 o'clock.